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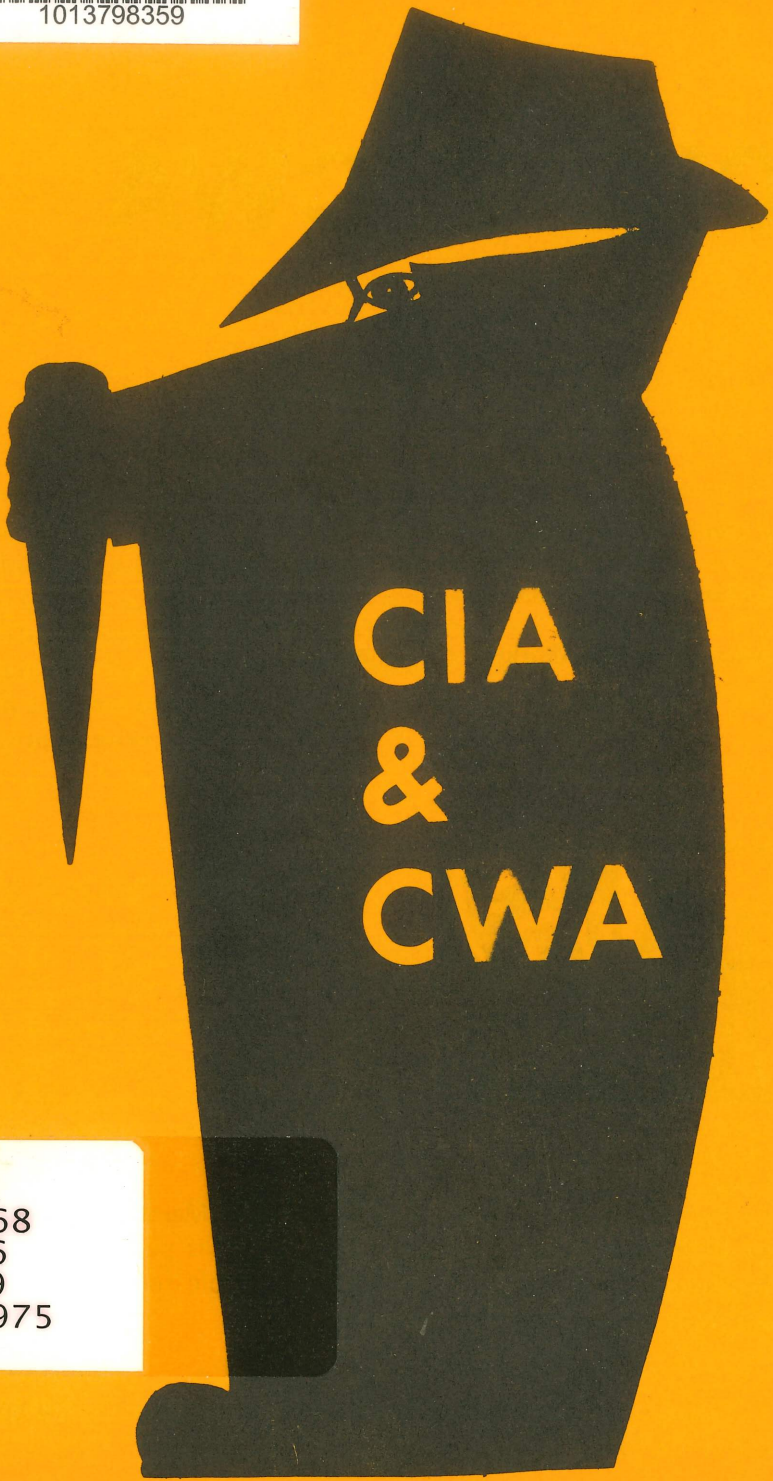

CIA & CWA

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1975

CIA & CWA

By Cynthia Sweeney

Member, Local 11500

Communications Workers of America

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The evidence is mounting. It all points to one conclusion: that the Communications Workers of America has been the active partner of the Central Intelligence Agency for more than 13 years.

Like all activities of the CIA, its penetration of U.S. labor unions has been cloaked in deep layers of secrecy. But the facts have started to emerge. This pamphlet is intended to alert the membership of the CWA to those facts . . . before they appear in the headlines of the daily newspapers.

OUR MYSTERIOUS TENANT

The CWA is not the sole occupant of our national headquarters building at 1925 K Street N.W. in the heart of Washington, D.C.

Another big organization has its headquarters there-- the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD). It's got a lot of money. About $6 million (openly) per year comes from the U.S. government.[1] More funds come from 94 multinational corporations and the AFL-CIO. AIFLD uses the money to conduct operations in 22 Latin American nations. Its mission: influence and fund Latin American labor unions.

It's no surprise that the CWA should share its offices with AIFLD. It was former CWA President Joseph Beirne, who conceived of AIFLD in 1958 and "is credited with taking the initial steps which led to AIFLD's establishment" in 1962, according to the AIFLD catalog.[2]

Beirne was the Secretary-Treasurer of AIFLD until his death in

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President Beirne, flanked by AIFLD's Executive Director William C. Doherty, Jr., and Country Program Director Charles Wheeler. Photo was taken in Wheeler's office when he was AIFLD CPD in Argentina. *(The AIFLD Report)*

1974, when the **AIFLD Report** eulogized him with an entire issue bearing Beirne's portrait on the cover.[3] Beirne's successor as head of the CWA, Glen Watts, assumed Beirne's seat on the Board of Trustees of AIFLD. George Meany is the AIFLD president, and corporation executive Peter Grace is chairman.

The links between CWA and AIFLD go on and on. The CWA's training facility at Front Royal, Virginia was turned over to AIFLD in 1966. It has been used since then for intensive 7-week "training courses" for Latin American unionists.[4] At Front Royal and at sites in Latin America, AIFLD claims to have trained no less than 243,668 foreign labor officials, down to the shop steward level.[5]

Most significant of all, AIFLD serves as a channel for large amounts of U.S. government funds to the CWA. It works like this: the government's Agency for International Development (AID) gives grants to AIFLD ($5.5 million in 1971; $5.7 million in 1972), which in turn enters into **subcontracts** with the CWA and five other major unions.[6] The content of these subcontracts is not known, but one report holds that the CWA's subcontract amounted to $300,000 per year in 1969.[7]

So we see that the CWA is deeply intertwined with AIFLD. The CWA--and its membership--cannot escape the responsibility for what our tenant AIFLD has been doing.

THE BANNED BOOK

What, then, has AIFLD been up to?

Philip Agee should know. He was employed as a CIA officer from 1957 to 1969, and spent most of that time operating out of the U.S. embassies in Ecuador, Uruguay and Mexico. In February, 1975, Agee published a book, **Inside the Company: CIA Diary**. "It is an attempt to open another small window to the kinds of secret activities that the U.S. government undertakes through the CIA in Third World countries in the name of U.S. national security," says Agee in the introduction to the 640-page volume. It is written in the form of a diary, setting down in great detail how Agee and his fellow CIA officers worked tirelessly to manipulate and control Latin American nations–their governments, their newspapers, their universities . . . . and their labor unions.

Although the U.S. press has commented widely on Agee's book, the CIA has been successful in suppressing its publication in the U.S. It has been able to do this because the CIA requires all employees to sign an agreement giving the CIA censorship rights over anything they might write in the future about the CIA. This was how the CIA forced Victor Marchetti, former executive assistant to the CIA deputy director, to make 168 deletions in his book **The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence** before it could be published in the U.S. in 1974.[8]

Philip Agee would not submit to censorship. Instead he had his book published in England by Penguin Books Ltd. You cannot find it in U.S. bookstores, but it can easily be ordered from bookstores in England or Canada.[9]

"CIA-CONTROLLED LABOR CENTER"

Agee describes AIFLD as a "CIA-controlled labor center financed through AID." He says that its "programs in adult education and social projects (are) used as a front for covering trade union organizing activity" of the CIA.[10] Agee gives first-hand accounts of how he worked with AIFLD to further CIA objectives such as gathering intelligence on private citizens, infiltrating agents under trade union cover, bribing key officials to work for the CIA, and subsidizing favored political parties, trade unions, and other institutions.

Just as the CIA uses AIFLD in Latin America, it works through

similar institutes for Asia and Africa--the Asian-American Free Labor Institute and African-American Labor Center. Each of these institutes has subcontract with CWA,[11] and Beirne served as Secretary-Treasurer of the African operation.[12]

From the start, says Agee, AIFLD was staffed by experienced CIA agents. He identifies Serafino Romualdi, the first AIFLD director, as a "long-time agent" of the CIA International Organizations Division.[13] The first AIFLD Social Projects Director (and now Executive Director) William Doherty, is said by Agee to be "considered to be one of our more effective labor agents."[14] The mission of Romualdi and Doherty was to give the CIA "day-to-day control of AIFLD."[15] In addition, the CIA planned to have each AIFLD training institute in a Latin American nation "headed by salaried CIA agents with operational control exercised by the (CIA) stations."[16] At the highest levels, CIA control over AIFLD was secured through its top officers--George Meany, Joseph Beirne and Peter Grace--all of whom Agee describes as active and knowing collaborators of the CIA.[17]

In addition, the CWA performs a special service for the CIA, says Agee. It is "used by the CIA to control the Post, Telegraph and Telephone Workers International," which is an international trade secretariat encompassing communications workers in many nations."[18]

THE HISTORICAL RECORD

No concerned member of the CWA can help but be shocked by Philip Agee's exposures. It's not the kind of thing you want to believe about your union. But can it be dismissed as unproved gossip? Too many shocking things about the CIA have turned out to be true in recent years. It is this historical record we must turn to.

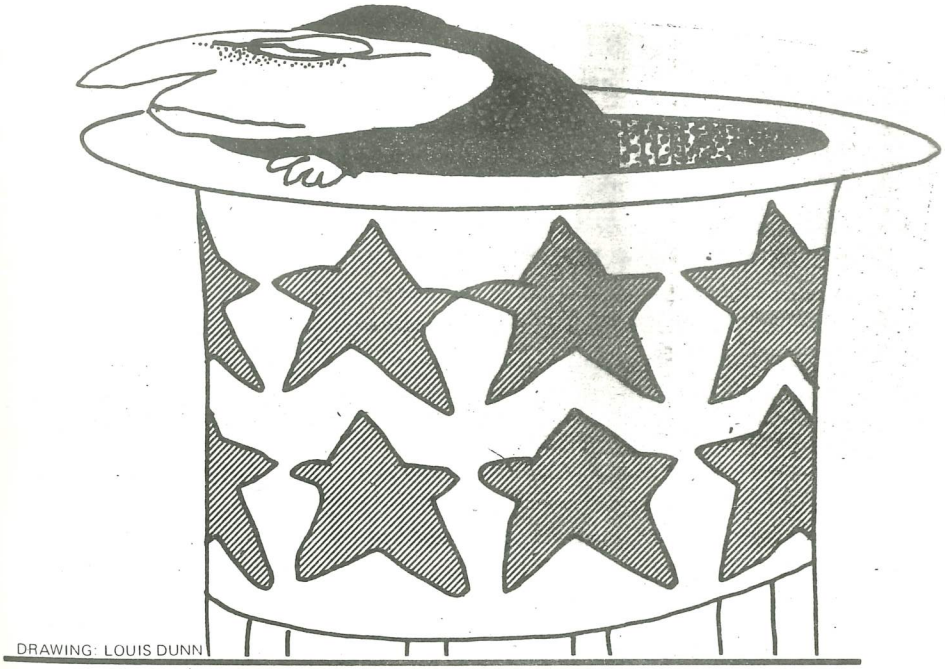
To begin with, there can be no doubt that the CIA has used AFL-CIO unions to channel funds overseas for many years. Walter and Victor Reuther of the United Auto Workers blew the cover on this massive operation in 1967, when Victor Reuther denounced the secret funding in a speech to the Labor Assembly for Peace and Walter Reuther quit his seat on the Board of Trustees of AIFLD.[19]

Ramparts magazine exposed the network of dummy foundations that the CIA used to pass funds to student groups, labor unions and others. Columnists Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson wrote in their

syndicated column: "Revelation that the Central Intelligence Agency has paid almost $1 million to the Newspaper Guild in six years gave the public a look at only the above-water part of the CIA-AFL-CIO iceberg. The rest of the CIA money paid to organized labor, estimated at around $100 million a year, is probably the biggest fund dished out by Central Intelligence to anyone." The column named AIFLD as one of the recipients of CIA funds.[20]

Secret funding was admitted and vigorously defended by Thomas W. Braden, former chief of the CIA's labor operations, in an article in the **Saturday Evening Post** entitled, "I'm Glad the CIA Is Immoral."[21]

This rash of disclosures created an uproar in Washington, and President Johnson pledged reform. Apparently the only way the CIA changed its labor operations was to make the funding a little more devious. Investigations by reporters from the **Washington Post** and **St. Louis Post-Dispatch** determined that much of the **secret** funding by the CIA was simply switched to **public** funding by the State Department's Agency for International Development (AID).[22] One of AIFLD's projects was singled out--the "Union-to-Union Program," which the reporters called a "CIA orphan." The



DRAWING: LOUIS DUNN

Union-to-Union Program serves as a conduit for funds that travel from AID to AIFLD to key U.S. unions and finally to the ultimate recipient--selected foreign labor officials.

The research has continued. Five independent investigators have published studies which conclude that the AFL-CIO functions as the active partner of the CIA in covert actions abroad, and that AIFLD is one of the most important instruments.[23] In addition, former CIA officer Victor Marchetti confirmed that the CIA uses labor unions in sections of his book that escaped the CIA censors.[24]

By all reports, AFL-CIO President George Meany is the king-pin of these operations, providing the CIA with a massive front to infiltrate funds, agents and influence into the Third World. Meany denies it all, of course. But his denial somehow fails to be convincing: "I take a great deal of pride in the work we've done overseas," says Meany, "and I resent the fact that the CIA is trying to horn in on it and say that they have done some of it."[25]

AIFLD IN ACTION

What is this "work" that George Meany and the CIA have done? If you ask that question at AIFLD headquarters, they will give you a pretty brochure listing housing projects, social programs, and education. "Social justice with freedom," was Joseph Beirne's phrase to describe AIFLD's goal.

The main achievements of AIFLD, however, don't appear to have even the faintest similarity to social justice or freedom. These achievements include vital support for the military takeovers of Brazil in 1964 and Chile in 1973. To be a militant trade unionist in Brazil or Chile today is to risk arrest and torture; to go on strike is to commit suicide. Yet the evidence provided by AIFLD itself shows that the Institute vigorously supported both these coups, and similar right-wing upheavals in Guyana in 1963 and the Dominican Republic in 1965.

BRAZIL: "IT WAS PLANNED MONTHS IN ADVANCE"

When a comfortable middle-class American wonders what makes those Latin Americans so hot-headed, he might pause for a moment and image what it would be like if some big foreign power

owned our telephone company, our automobile plants, our other big industries and much of our farm land. Intolerable? Yet it has long been a reality for Latin Americans. The big foreign power is the U.S. Each year Latin Americans have seen our multinational giants take home large profits while their own people suffer from poverty, unemployment and malnutrition.

Such is the root cause of the angry nationalism that has grown so strong in Latin America. In Brazil, the nationalist movement triumphed in the early 1960's with the election of Joao Goulart as president. It was not long before Goulart was moving toward nationalization of key U.S. investments, such as the telephone company owned by IT&T. Along with 94 other U.S. corporations, IT&T was a contributor to AIFLD.[26]

In George Meany's eyes, Goulart was controlled by leftists. He had to go. It was not long before AIFLD threw its resources behind the right-wing forces that were preparing a military takeover.

In 1963, AIFLD trained a special class of 33 Brazilian labor leaders at Washington, D.C.[27] One of these AIFLD trainees went home to organize key communications workers in support of the military coup. When the pro-Goulart labor movement called a general strike to block the coup, these key workers broke the strike and kept the telegraph lines open to coordinate troop movements.[28]

AIFLD Social Projects Director William Doherty bragged about his Institute's role shortly after the 1964 takeover:

"Some of [the Brazilian trainees] were so active that they became intimately involved in some of the clandestine operations of the revolution before it took place on April 1. What happened in Brazil on April 1 did not just happen--it was planned--and planned months in advance. Many of the trade union leaders--some of whom were actually trained in our institute--were involved in the revolution, and in the overthrow of the Goulart regime."[29]

Apparently the CIA was involved in many, if not all, aspects of the military takeover. Agee reports that the CIA's Rio de Janeiro station financed urban demonstrations against Goulart just before the coup.[30]

In a laudatory article, **Reader's Digest** reported: "The military regime promptly appointed four AIFLD graduates to clean out the Red-dominated unions and restore democratic processes."[31] But the joke was on AIFLD. It turned out that the military dictators wouldn't allow normal trade union activity, not even the timid company unionism of AIFLD. As a result, AIFLD "broke" with the military regime that it had worked so hard to bring to power.[32]

Brazilians still live under the fascist regime. U.S. corporations have found the investment climate to be excellent. The gap between Brazil's rich and poor has widened. **Time** magazine says that "Torture is still widely used in Brazil," and carried the first-hand account of one of its own correspondents who was arrested and tortured by military police. "At least 79 people have died under torture since the coup," says **Time**, "and thousands of others have been subjected to electric shocks."[33]

CHILE: "STRIKES WILL NOT BE NECESSARY"

The military dictators in Brazil look as gentle as kittens, however, when compared to their counterparts in Chile. AIFLD has not been so quick to claim credit for helping to bring them to power. Yet the evidence indicates that AIFLD's role in Chile was at least as important as it had been in Brazil nine years earlier.

Once again, the ownership of key industries was the ultimate issue. Investments of AIFLD contributors like Kennecot Copper, Anaconda and IT&T were at stake. The government of Salvador Allende had nationalized these properties, pointing out that the profits extracted by the investors over the years far exceeded the original value of the investment.

As the U.S. press has widely reported, the U.S. government began a clandestine war against the Allende government. The objective was to create economic and political chaos in Chile to weaken Allende's support, and finally to use the military and police to overthrow him.

CIA director Colby recently admitted to Congress that the CIA spent "at least $8 million" from 1970 to 1973 in its efforts to "destabilize" the Allende government.[34] Not surprisingly, AIFLD also intensified its work in Chile.

For years, AIFLD had been battling against the growth of the Central Confederation of Workers (CUT), Chile's largest labor center. CUT's outlook was socialist, so it did not meet AIFLD's definition of "free" trade unionism. In 1962, AIFLD's William Doherty led a delegation to Chile with the mission of splitting off telephone workers from the militant leadership of the Union of Telephone Employees. After a lushly-financed campaign and the firings of militant leaders, Doherty's faction gained control of the union. But the situation was reversed by 1967.[35]

About the same time, AFL-CIO representative Morris Paladino (now director of AIFLD's counterpart in Asia) sought to make a deal with Jose Goldsack, the leader of the minority Christian Democrat faction of the CUT. Split off from CUT and we'll pay your expenses as a rival labor federation, said Paladino. The deal fell through when Goldsack took the money and backed out.[36]

Undaunted by these failures, AIFLD worked steadily to build its influence in Chile. A key target was associations of the elite professional and technical workers, whom AIFLD sought to turn against the large mass of industrial workers in CUT. From 1962 to 1972, 8,837 Chileans were trained by AIFLD in seminars in Chile. Seventy-nine key Chilean labor officials were brought to AIFLD's Front Royal Institute.[37]

When Allende was elected president of Chile in 1970, largely through CUT support, the activities of AIFLD intensified. Large grants of money were channeled by AIFLD's Union-to-Union program to key professional and business associations that opposed Allende.[38] The training activities at Front Royal were stepped up. In a six-month period ending in early 1973, 29 Chileans attended Front Royal.[39]

AIFLD's trainees were prominent in the leadership of the disruptions that paved the way for the military coup. **Newsweek** reported: "According to intelligence insiders, the majority of the $8 million allocated for CIA covert operations in Chile from 1970 to 1973 was actually used to subsidize strikes by truckers, shopkeepers and taxi drivers that crippled the Allende government and plunged Chile deeper into chaos."[40] When **Time** magazine correspondent Rudolph Rausch asked some striking truckers where the money had come from for the lavish meal they were eating, they told him, "From the CIA."[41]

The military junta finally launched its assault on September 11, 1973, and killed Allende in the presidential palace. The junta wasted no time in abolishing CUT and suppressing all trade union activity. Pro-Allende union leaders were prime targets for the executioners and torturers who killed an estimated 30,000 people in the aftermath of the coup.[42] The Mexico City daily newspaper **Excelsior** reported that sitdown strikers protesting frozen wages and rising prices were machine-gunned by troops.[43]

The **IAM Machinist** of January 10, 1974, quotes: "General Oscar Bonilla, the junta's interior minister, explaining the official attitude on strikes: 'They will not be necessary; the government will settle workers' problems.'"[44]

Time magazine reports that "torture is, by common consent,

a tool of the government's newly centralized intelligence apparatus. Its most common forms are electric shock and beatings; with women prisoners, multiple rape has been used to force confessions."[45]

Meanwhile the junta has given nationalized U.S. properties back to their former U.S. corporate owners. Inflation hit 200% in 1974 and the currency has been devalued 10 times in the first five months of 1975.[46] The wages of many Chilean workers have fallen to the starvation level, and beggars have appeared in large numbers on the streets of Santiago.

Certain labor leaders are still permitted to function in Chile, however. In January, 1974, two graduates of AIFLD training programs, Eduardo Rojas and Luis Villenas, were permitted to establish a new labor federation.[47] This is indeed a tribute to the junta's confidence in AIFLD's students. But the new labor federation is not permitted to conduct any normal trade union activities.

MEANY DISOWNS HIS BABY

As the news spread of unprecedented murder and torture in Chile, many trade unionists in the United States demanded that their unions condemn the junta. Even George Meany had to yield to this pressure. The ultimate irony of the AIFLD's intervention in Chile came on August 6, 1974, when the AFL-CIO Executive Council adopted a resolution criticizing the Chilean junta chief Augusto Pinochet as a "militaristic and oppressive ruler" who had failed to "restore trade union rights of the Chilean labor movement."[48] It was Brazil all over again.

While Meany and AIFLD claim to have clean hands in Chile, many U.S. trade unionists think otherwise. More than 71 labor union officials, including Meatcutters International Secretary-Treasurer Patrick Gorman, have signed the circular letter of the "Union Committee for an All-Labor AIFLD."[49] Its message is simple: "We call upon the national officials of the labor movement to take action to disassociate AIFLD from the multinational corporations and all government agencies."

This is a plea that should be seriously considered by the Communications Workers of America--the landlord, subcontractor, and earliest supporter of AIFLD.

FOOTNOTES

1. $6.6 million in fiscal 1974 from the Agency for International Development (AID). Current Technical Service Contracts, AID Office of Contract Management, December 31, 1973, p. 87.

2. **A Decade of Worker to Worker Cooperation**, AIFLD, Washington, D.C., p. 13.

3. **The AIFLD Report**, Vol. 12, No. 5, October/November 1974.

4. **Front Royal Institute Catalog**, AIFLD, p. 2.

5. **Annual Progress Report**, AIFLD, 1962-74, p. 1

6. **Hearings**, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Foreign Assistance Legislation, June 1971, pp. 298-99. The other unions with AIFLD subcontracts are the American Federation of Musicians, the Brotherhood of Railway, Airline and Steamship Clerks, the International Federation of Petroleum and Chemical Workers, the Retail Clerks International Association, and the Textile Workers Union of America. We don't know exactly what these unions do under their subcontracts.

7. Richard Dudman, "AID Funds for CIA Projects," **St. Louis Post-Dispatch**, April 13, 1969.

8. Victor Marchetti & John D. Marks, **The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence** (Knopf, 1974), p. xxvi.

9. The book can be ordered from Paperback Parade Ltd., 32 Queen Street South, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. Price: $2.95 Canadian currency.

10. Philip Agee, **Inside the Company: CIA Diary** (Penguin, 1975), p. 600.

11. Same as footnote 6.

12. **AALC**, Catalog of the African-American Labor Center, back cover.

13. Agee, p. 245.

14. Agee, p. 302.

15. Agee, p. 244.

16. Agee, p. 245.

17. Agee, p. 244.

18. Agee, p. 605.

19. Robert H. Dockery, **Survey of the Alliance for Progress: Labor Policies and Programs**, Study for Subcommittee on American Republics Affairs, U.S. Senate, July 15, 1968, p. 7

20. Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson, "CIA Figures in Reuther-Meany Rift," **Washington Post**, February 16, 1967, p. D15

21. Thomas W. Braden, "I'm Glad the CIA Is Immoral," **Saturday Evening Post**, May 20, 1967.

22. William Grieder, "Unions Turn to AID After CIA Pullout," **Washington Post**, April 21, 1969; Richard Dudman, "Channel to Overseas Labor", April 14, 1969, and "AID Funds for CIA Projects," April 13, 1969, **St. Louis Post-Dispatch.**

23. Sidney Lens, "Partners: Labor and the CIA," **Progressive**, February, 1975, p. 35; Fred Hirsch, **An Analysis of Our AFL-CIO Role in Latin America** (San Jose, 1974); Ruth Needleman, "The AFL-CIO Abroad: Behind the Chile Coup," **Guardian**, September 25, 1974, p. 21; Susanne Jonas, "Trade Union Imperialism in the Dominican Republic," **NACLA's Latin America & Empire Report**, April, 1975, p. 13; and Winslow Peck, "Clandestine Enforcement of U.S. Foreign Labor Policy," **Counter-spy**, Fall, 1974, p. 42.

24. Marchetti and Marks, p. 48-9, 51, 395.

25. Spoken on May 8, 1967, quoted by Susanne Bodenheimer, "U.S. Labor's Conservative Role in Latin America," **Progressive**, November, 1967.

26. **American Institute for Free Labor Development**, Hearings before Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, August 1, 1969, p. 21.

27. Serafino Romualdi, **Presidents and Peons** (Funk and Wagnalls, 1967), p. 289.

28. Eugene Methvin, "Labor's New Weapon for Democracy," **Reader's Digest** (an AIFLD contributor), October, 1966.

29. Panel discussion, Mutual Broadcasting System, July 12, 1964, quoted in Robert Dockery, **Survey of the Alliance for Progress: Labor Policies and Programs,** Subcommittee on American Republics Affairs, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, July 15, 1968, p. 14.

30. Agee, p. 362.

31. Methvin, **op. cit.**

32. Methvin, **op. cit.**

33. **Time** magazine, November 18, 1974, p. 48.

34. **Newsweek**, September 23, 1974, p. 51.

35. Eduardo Labarca Godard, **Chile Invadido** (Santiago: Editora Austral, 1968), quoted by Fred Hirsch, **An Analysis of Our AFL-CIO Role in Latin America** (San Jose, 1974), p. 30-31.

36. Romualdi, pp. 345-354.

37. **A Decade of Worker-to-Worker Cooperation**, AIFLD, p. 43.

38. Union-to-Union Program Report for 1973, as quoted by Ruth Needleman, "The AFL-CIO Abroad: Behind the Chile Coup," **Guardian**, September 25, 1974, p. 21.

39. AIFLD memorandum dated February 28, 1973, as quoted by Hirsch, p. 33.

40. **Newsweek**, September 30, 1974, p. 37.

41. **Time** magazine, September 24, 1973.

42. Hirsch, p. 40.

43. Quoted by Hirsch, p. 41.

44. Quoted by Hirsch, p. 42.

45. **Time** magazine, April 23, 1974, p. 44.

46. **Wall Street Journal**, May 28, 1975, p. 1.

47. Hirsch, p. 41.

48. **The AIFLD Report**, Vol. 12, No. 5, October/November 1974, p. 6.

49. Union Committee for an All-Labor AIFLD, 1269 Howard Street, Suite 101, San Francisco, California 94103.

Chas. Gerretsen—Gamma

General Pinochet (bottom), dictator of Chile

San Diego, California
June 1, 1975

Senator Frank Church
Chairman
Select Committee on the CIA
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Church:

We are members of the Communication Workers of America. In recent months we have heard charges that the CIA has used our national union as a vehicle to carry out many secret operations in Latin American and elsewhere around the world.

These charges center on the American Institute for Free Labor Development, which is actually housed in the CWA national headquarters building in Washington, D.C. Former CIA officer Philip Agee, in his recent book Inside the Company: CIA Diary, describes AIFLD as "CIA-controlled" and states that its director is a "long-time agent" of the CIA.

We know that, as a Democrat, you have in the past received campaign contributions from the AFL-CIO. But we hope that short-sighted political concerns will not stop you and your committee from getting to the bottom of this situation.

If our union has been used by the CIA, we want to know the truth--the whole truth. Your committee can find it out.

Yours truly,

P. H. Martin
A Burns

Eileen Bookasso
P. D. Crotts
Sandy Smith
Carol Keeton
Linda Smith

E. J. Riel
Cynthia Sweeney
Dianna Hunsicker
Leanne Forsythe
Sheri Mosteller
M. S. Bradford
Nicole Sullivan
Theresa Ruffino